

IRAQI DESTINY

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**Hollywood megastar
fires up 101st soldiers**

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Soldiers get break from Iraq:

R & R plans range from marriage to football

by Beau Whittington
Army News Service

BALTIMORE -- The first 192 troops to return to the states under the Operation Iraqi Freedom "Rest and Recuperation" Leave Program arrived at BWI Airport this morning.

While the group was homogenous in their desert camouflage uniforms, their directions were as varied as their personalities.

Some were headed home just to share time with family and friends, as they rest from the stresses of the mission.

One was looking forward to his wedding and one looking forward to his son's birth within the next 48 hours.

Numerous others were heading home to see newborns they'd never seen. But one simply wanted to see his Alabama Crimson Tide beat 14th ranked Arkansas.

A handful of family members began to gather an hour before the 7 a.m. scheduled flight.

One of them, 21-month-old Angelina Short, seemed a little confused as she quietly waited in momma Melissa's arms. Though she didn't realize daddy Spc. Jim Short would be home for a short break from his 4th Infantry Division mission, she soldiered on with a grin anytime a reporter pointed a camera her way.

Sister Rachel was a little calmer, as she slept her way through the commotion. The 8-week old couldn't miss a father she'd never seen.

The media frenzy began as the soldiers began arriving through customs.

First out of the gate was Spc. Adrian Dupree. Cameras and microphones surrounded him -- reporters knew his plans.

Waiting in the wings was Mirasha Pompey, Dupree's



Staff Sgt. Carmen Maldonado

Spc. James Short holds his 8-week-old daughter Rachel Elena for the first time after arriving at BWI airport, Md., Sept. 26, for a two-week rest and recreation pass from his tour of duty in Iraq.

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Army medics give EMT training to Iraqi medical staff

Spc. Blake Kent
22nd MPAD

TALLAFAR, Iraq -- Iraqi medical personnel here received five days of Emergency Medical Technician training last week from combat medical soldiers of the 3rd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

"Over the past five days, everything has been based on basic Emergency Medical Technician skills," said Maj. Don Sarmiento of Houston, Texas, a surgeon with the 3rd Brigade "Rakkasans." He said the Iraqis are learning the same skills as combat medics learn in their military training.

Soldiers began giving medical training to medical personnel in the outlying village health clinics, but seeing the increase in quality medical care from the medics, the class was presented to medical personnel throughout the whole of the 3rd Brigade area of operations.

"We are now doing a train-the-trainer course that will send teachers back to the major medical hubs in our area to carry on the training," Sarmiento said.

The course gives modern training for doctors, emergency room workers, nurses and ambulance personnel.

"In this country before, ambulance drivers were only drivers. They pretty much just put the body in the ambulance and hoped they made it to the hospital in time," he said.

The course focused heavily on Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation training, as well as training personnel how to move patients properly and assess medical problems.

"We are hoping that when the local people see us here giving training to their medical personnel, they will become more confident in their medical staff," said Staff Sgt. Kenneth Whited of Bucyrus, Ohio, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment. Seven people from different medical battalions in the brigade helped with the training.

According to Whited, the Iraqi medical personnel were not the only ones who benefited from the training.

"For a lot of our soldiers, this is giving practice for them," Whited said. "The transition of 91B and 91C are combining to the 91W, which is requiring soldiers to learn a number of new skills. It is mandatory now that the soldiers maintain a basic level EMS and CPR certification as well as basic trauma life support (BTLS), and trauma AIMS."



Spc. Blake Kent

Combat medical soldiers trained hospital personnel in CPR skills and patient assessment skills, giving them knowledge they can take back and teach in their own hospitals.

Acting Secretary of the Army visits 101st



Sgt. Robert Woodward

by Sgt. Robert Woodward
101st Abn. Div. PAO

Acting Secretary of the Army Les Brownlee visited the Screaming Eagle soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division Friday, assessing the progress of postwar northern Iraq and answering questions asked by soldiers.

Brownlee, who himself won two Silver Stars in Vietnam, also awarded six Bronze Star Medals and three Purple Hearts to division soldiers during the visit.

At a "sensing session," Brownlee addressed soldiers' questions relating to unit rotation.

"A lot of new changes are being made in the midst of our transition to a new Army, in order to prepare for these rotations," Brownlee said. "This includes combat support and combat service support."

Among the changes, Brownlee revealed a plan to convert National Guard artillery person-

nel into Military Police to help ease an anticipated shortage in theater once rotations are complete.

Brownlee apologized to reservists who recently learned their tour in Iraq would be extended to a full year.

"I know that some of you were mobilized for up to four months before you deployed," Brownlee said. "The decision was made, for the sake of continuity and stability, to keep the team together."

Brownlee, who began his military career in the 101st, also praised the soldiers for their hard work far from home and promised to work to grant more bonuses to those who reenlist while in Iraq.

"What you're doing is critically important," he said. "America knows that the only people standing between them and the terrorists is you. I want to thank you for your service to the Army and the nation."

"You are highly skilled combat veterans, and we want to keep every one of you in the army."

(Above) Acting Secretary of the Army Les Brownlee conducts a sensing session with soldiers. (Below) Brownlee and Maj. Gen David H. Petraeus, commander, 101st Abn. Div. (AAAslt.) walk and talk.



Combined public safety academy launches after one-year in development

by Pfc. Chris Jones
40th PAD

A new academy designed to combine training facilities for all public safety agencies throughout the city opened in Mosul Saturday.

The Mosul Public Safety Academy will house the training for all public safety occupations in Mosul, including law enforcement, firefighting, emergency medical assistance, traffic violations, investigations and traffic investigations. Before this academy, public safety training sites were scattered around the city. A unified school ensures all students receive similar, equal training.

One year and more than \$100,000 was spent building the academy.

A host of leaders from the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and the Mosul government came to applaud those involved in the academy construction and offer best wishes to the students.

Maj. Gen. David H. Petraeus, commander, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and Khasro Goran, Mosul's deputy mayor, led the ceremonial ribbon-cutting which marked the opening of the academy.

"These facilities are representative of what you'll find in other parts of the world," said Col. Joseph Anderson, commander, 2nd Brigade, 101st Abn. Div. "This academy will contribute greatly to the safety of the people in Iraq."

The academy's first class will teach students basic law enforcement. Other courses will begin soon after, said 1st Lt. Daniel Oh, logistics officer, 503rd Military Police Battalion (Airborne).

"Soldiers from the 158th MP Detachment, National Guard, did a lot of the training. A lot of them had full-time jobs as policemen, so a lot of the training is modeled after American law enforcement," Oh said. However, soldiers are beginning to step out of the trainers' shoes and allow Iraqi police veterans to train students. This is part of the collective effort by Coalition Forces to bring a sense

of independence and self-sufficiency to the people of Iraq.

"The goal of the American forces is to have them self-sufficient," Oh said. "I'm sure they want their own country again. Iraqi police have taken full control of the training."

The facility includes a barracks, a dining facility, a gym, a headquarters building, training areas and several classrooms.

Construction of the academy began more than a year ago but halted during the war. In August, Coalition Forces continued construction efforts. More than \$100,000 was spent on improvements, Oh said.

The 926th Engineer Battalion and the 503rd MP Bn. were at the helm of the construction efforts, Oh said.

Additions to the academy will continue. Indoor and outdoor shooting ranges and a shoot-house are among the future projects expected to be built. Once complete, the academy will have the capacity to train 450 students at any given time, Oh said.

The opening of the academy coincides with a recent three-day seminar at the Civil Military Operations Command for leaders of the Mosul Police Department. At the seminar, leaders were taught such topics as religious tolerance to help make the public safety system in Mosul impartial and ethical.

"It's important that you all understand the big picture of where your country is headed," said Anderson on the first day of the seminar, discussing leadership techniques. "We as your coalition partners remain dedicated to your development



Pfc. Chris Jones

Col. Joseph Anderson, commander, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) speaks at the grand opening ceremony of the Mosul Public Safety Academy.

and, more importantly, to your independence. But things are coming back into your hands, and responsibility is being turned back over to you, the leaders of a new Iraq. Be fair and be honest. There's no substitute."

Freedom and equality are the foundations for the dream Coalition Forces have for the new Iraq, said Inspector Younis Mahmoud Kareem, academy training supervisor. A firm public safety system in Mosul is the root that guarantees these foundations, he said.

"This academy paves a bright, secure future for many," said Inspector Younis Mahmoud Kareem, academy training supervisor. "The students at this school, they will learn that everybody has rights and nobody should be oppressed. They will learn and know that everyone is equal and we all have the right to be treated with respect."

Entertaining the troops...

Bruce Willis and the Accelerators rock 101st with morale concert

by Pfc. Thomas Day
40th PAD

Silver screen star Bruce Willis and his blues band visited the soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) in Northern Iraq Thursday. The 101st stop was just one in a number of goodwill visits on the Bruce Willis and the Accelerators "Touch of Home Tour" this week.

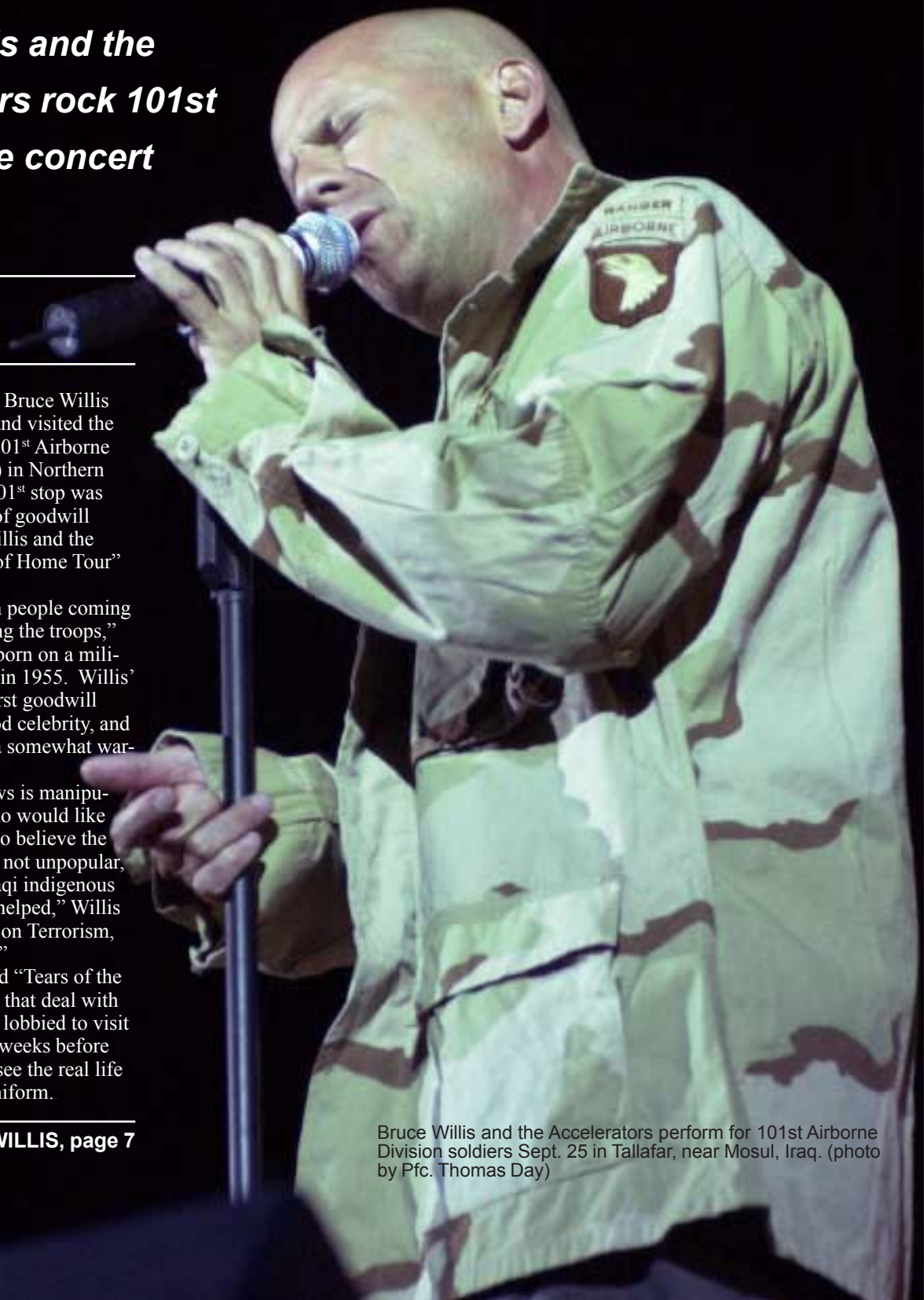
"I didn't see enough people coming out here and supporting the troops," said Willis, who was born on a military base in Germany in 1955. Willis' visit was the 101st's first goodwill visit from a Hollywood celebrity, and he stands out among a somewhat war-weary Tinsletown.

"Back home, the news is manipulated ... by people who would like the American people to believe the war is unpopular. It's not unpopular, especially with the Iraqi indigenous people that are being helped," Willis said. "This is the War on Terrorism, it's worth fighting for."

The "Hart's War" and "Tears of the Sun" actor, both films that deal with the military, tirelessly lobbied to visit the troops for several weeks before getting the chance to see the real life men and women in uniform.

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Bruce Willis and the Accelerators perform for 101st Airborne Division soldiers Sept. 25 in Tallafar, near Mosul, Iraq. (photo by Pfc. Thomas Day)





photos by Pfc. Thomas Day

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Willis clearly enjoyed himself playing in front of the audience of homesick soldiers.

"I wanted to sign up and fight with you guys, but they told me I was too old," he quipped. Willis also used some colorful language when describing what he would do if he had "four minutes with Saddam" and offered \$1 million to any soldier who delivered Saddam's head to his doorstep.

Willis ate a late lunch with Command Sgt. Maj. Marvin Hill, the top 101st Airborne Division enlisted soldier, before flying around the division's area of operation in a CH-47 Chinook helicopter to meet the "Screaming Eagles." The busy day ended for Willis and his band after a one-hour concert in front of several hundred 3rd Brigade, 101st Airborne soldiers in Tall Afar.

Col. Michael Linnington, 3rd Brigade commander, introduced Willis before his band's set and afterwards presented him with a 101st Airborne Division flag. Willis also donned Linnington's desert uniform top for the show after the brigade commander's name and rank were appropriately removed.

Willis left after his performance with a simple message for the 101st soldiers: "Stay safe and God bless you all."

Above) 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Division Command Sergeant Major Marvin Hill welcomes actor/musician Bruce Willis to Mosul, Iraq, Sept. 25. (Below) Bruce Willis looks out the window of a Chinook helicopter en-route to his performance at Tallafar.



Top Capitol Hill military money man visits 101st

Lewis tells troops Washington will not reduce hostile-fire pay

by Pfc. Thomas Day
40th PAD

Rep. Jerry Lewis, R-CA, chairman of the House Military Appropriations sub-committee, led a nine-member congressional delegation Sunday to meet constituents fighting with the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) in Mosul, Iraq.

Lewis took the opportunity to reassure the soldiers that published reports of budget slashes cutting into hostile-fire pay were "just a rumor coming from somewhere."

Lewis is the senior member of the House Appropriations Committee and chairs the National Security Appropriations sub-committee, which last week passed the 2004 defense appropriations bill.

"(The hostile-fire pay cut) is absolutely not a part of this bill," Lewis said. "The congress would absolutely not consider such an action, period, but particularly not at a time like this."

Before jumping on a C-130 airplane for Baghdad, Lewis affirmed his

The delegation included GOP Texans Henry Bonilla and Kay Granger, fellow Republicans John Shimkus (Ill.), George Nethercutt (Wis.), and Don Sherwood (Penn.). Democrats Tim Holden (Penn.), Norm Dicks (Wis.), and Ellen Tauscher (Cal.) made the trip a bipartisan affair.

Maj. Gen. David H. Petraeus, 101st Airborne Division commanding general, who has hosted a number of Washington lawmakers in recent weeks, introduced Lewis during dinner as "a very, very long time friend and a huge supporter of the U.S. Military." Petraeus entertained a seven-member congressional delegation on Sept.

15 that included Rep. Ike Skelton, the ranking Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee.

Support for President Bush's \$87 billion proposal for the ongoing missions in Afghanistan and Iraq, but doubted the \$20 billion directed at rebuilding Iraq would be sufficient.

"I don't know how much is going to be required to help the Iraqi people and this country," he said during a quick press conference with both American and Iraqi media.

The 13-term Californian came equipped with a bag full of AT&T calling cards for the 101st soldiers, much to the excitement of the 101st Airborne commander. "No more hard candy...what (the soldiers) really want is phone cards," Petraeus said.

"Call home - America loves you and we love what you're about," Lewis told the soldiers.



Sgt. Justin Harris

Rep. Don Sherwood, (Penn.) talks with the soldiers of the 101st in the MWR building at the division main. Sherwood, along with a group of congressmen, visited the 101st area of operations to meet constituents.

LOGGING ON

Internet cafes get Mosul on the 'net'

Spc. Mary Rose Xenikakis
22nd MPAD

Mosul's connection with the world, through Internet, is now a reality. The first government-funded public Internet establishment, Internet Café #10, was officially reopened Sept. 27, in Mosul, with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

The State Company Internet Services, centralized in Baghdad, has been reopening many Internet Cafés throughout Iraq during the past few weeks. Four are open in Baghdad and two more are scheduled to be open in Baghdad within a week, said Al Hadithig, manager of State Company Internet Services of Iraq. Mosul is also expecting five more to open within the next few weeks. Internet Café #10 is now able to supply Internet access and classes to the local people.

Maj. Gen. David H. Petraeus, commanding general of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Khasro Goran, Mosul deputy mayor, and Mahmood Rafeek Al Hadithig showed to cut the ribbon and tour the refurbished business.

"We all know that knowledge is power," Petraeus said. "This Internet café and the others that will soon open will empower the cities citizens. The knowledge and information will be critical for the rebuilding of Mosul."

Currently, Mosul does not have a reliable Internet communications link with Baghdad, so with help from Coalition Forces the Internet connection in Mosul is through satellite. Each café will have 10 to 25 computers.

During and after the war looters destroyed many of the Internet businesses. At Internet Café #10, employees managed to save much of the businesses equipment by securing it in private homes when the looters ravaged through the city, according to Koteeba Al Neeme, Mosul director for State Company Internet Services.

Petraeus and Goran both spoke about the changes that have already happened and the many changes to come for the people of Iraq.

"Each reopening is a reminder to us



Spc. Mary Rose Xenikakis

The entrance to the first government funded Internet Cafe was crowded by soldiers and patrons during the grand reopening of the cafe. Maj. Gen. David H. Petraeus, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) commander, also made an appearance at the festivities and ribbon cutting.

what can happen when Coalition Forces and Iraqis work together," Petraeus said. "Although, Coalition Forces did provide assistance and resources, again the bulk of the work and the bulk of expertise came from the Iraqi people."

Goran spoke to the guest about the freedoms that sat in front of them, while looking at the computers.

He said the ex-regime kept the Iraqi citi-

zens from even basic information. With the help from the Coalition Forces the citizens of Iraq will grow from the knowledge now being freely given to them.

Petraeus finished his address to the guests by saying, "Our soldiers are proud to have given the greatest gift of all to the Iraqi people. That is their freedom. That freedom includes access to the information superhighway."

News around Iraq

MPs get Iraqi canine unit underway

by Staff Sgt. Mark S. Rickert
Army News Service

BAGHDAD, Iraq -- U.S. Army Military Police soldiers renovated an abandoned torture chamber, and the cells are now air conditioned, clean and filled with dogs.

Sgt. Emily Frasca, a police academy instructor with the 382nd Military Police Battalion, from San Diego, Calif., helped kick start the new Iraqi canine unit. Along with other soldiers in her unit, Frasca teaches classes at the police academy in Baghdad.

When someone asked her to help with the canine unit, she jumped at the opportunity.

"I love working with dogs," said Frasca. "And when they offered me the opportunity to be the liaison for the trainers and coordinate with the 18th MP Brigade to get equipment for these guys, I saw an opportunity to share what I know and what I've learned."

The canine unit is quickly progressing. The Iraqi trainers are learning new methods of training, and the dogs are multiplying -- one German shepherd has already given birth to five pups. But the Baghdad canine unit has not always received this kind of support.

Before the war, the canine unit was moved to a facility outside of Baghdad. Here, the trainers received very little support.

They lacked the money to buy training equipment, vaccinations and training manuals.

Frasca said that the unit became so out of touch with the other police officers that they eventually became ineffective.

"The trainers were cut off from money and other dogs to breed theirs with," said Frasca. "They ended up inbreeding the dogs and working with the older training styles. They started training dogs that weren't fully capable of being police dogs."

After the coalition forces became involved with the Baghdad police force, they decided to bring the canine unit back into Baghdad.

They cleaned out one of the old prison facilities and transformed it into a kennel for the dogs.

"When I saw the old torture camp, I looked into the cells and saw the potential for a kennel," said Frasca. "We turned the prison into a 13-room kennel, with an office in the back and a room for trainers to stay in overnight, so they could protect the dogs."

Aside from coaching the trainers on new methods of training, Frasca also helps assess the animals for strong and weak points.

The dogs are then chosen for specific job training, such as bomb detection, attack or narcotics.

If, for example, a dog has a favorite toy as a puppy, it is easier to train that dog for bomb detection.

"We look for the love of a toy," said Frasca. "This makes it easier for us to instill sniffing behaviors. We can test the

dog to find the ball in a bush or in rubble.

If they have a good sniffing behavior, it is easier for us to carry that behavior into searching patterns later on." Frasca says the dogs are also learning a new language.

Because Frasca teaches in English, the Iraqi trainers bark English commands to their canines.

In a way, this provides the trainers and their dogs with a coded language. "This allows police officers to communicate with their dogs without the (Iraqi) locals understanding," said Frasca. "And in some situations, this can give us the upper hand."

(Editor's note: Sgt. Mark S. Rickert is a member of the 372nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment.)



Staff Sgt. Mark S. Rickert

An Iraqi canine trainer coaches Hawon, a German shepherd police dog, as they search for TNT hidden in the wheel well of a new Iraqi police car during a training exercise at a police station in Baghdad Sept. 16.

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high school sweetheart. During Dupree's leave the 24-year old lovebirds plan to marry.

"It's about time," Pompey said. "Ten years is a long wait."

When the reservist deployed in March, he promised Pompey he'd be home as soon as possible to share the vows.

He saw the leave as an opportunity to keep his promise.

He admitted it would be difficult to return to the desert, but said the break would provide, "the vigor and confidence to complete the tour."

Once the soldiers satisfied the media's hunger, they headed in different directions.

Some headed for the phones, some to rearrange travel and some just wanted a hot shower.

Sgt. Donald Stanford was headed home to see his wife and five children - ages 7 to 2.

"This is great," the Kansas native said about being able to see his family after five months. "I thought it'd be at least a year."

Standord's mission with the 1st Armored Division is, "keeping the streets safe and helping the Iraqis get back to business," he said about peace keeping.

"Some people love us, some hate us," he said about the Baghdad view of his job. "You just have to deal with the people."

Spc. Robert Hernandez headed straight for the ticket counter. His goal was to do whatever he could to avoid a six-hour lay-over in his trip to North Carolina. He said he's in a hurry to see the 5-month-old he's never seen.

"I didn't think I'd get to see them until January," he beamed about his short-notice trip.

He knew there were plans for the new R&R, but like the rest, he wasn't sure when it would begin.

I'd come in from a mission and gone to

bed," he recalled about the last 36 hours. "Then the first sergeant tapped on the shoulder and said, 'pack your bags, you're going home.' I thought I was sleeping, but I got up to be sure."

Spc. Timothy Martin headed to the phone to call his wife to come pick him up.

He said having only five hours notice before he departed, he wanted to make sure he made it on time before his wife began the drive from Williamsburg, Va., to pick him up.

Though their destinations varied and many would have liked more time to prepare, they all showed appreciation for the free trip home.

Under the program, servicemembers and DoD civilians serving 12-month tours in hostile fire or imminent danger pay areas can qualify for 15 days of chargeable leave and a free flight to either Germany or the United States.

Troops become eligible for the respite once they have had boots on the ground for 89 days, but leave must be taken prior to the 11th month of their tour.

"The program enables our servicemembers to get away from the stresses associated with their missions and to focus on family and friends," said Lt. Col. Lorelei Coplen, Army G-1 spokeswoman for the program. "We see this as an investment in our force's quality of life that will actually improve readiness."

Beginning last week, one flight a day has been carrying up to 270 troops from Kuwait City to Baltimore.

The flights will stop at Rhein Main Air Base in Frankfurt, Germany, for refueling. Passengers who wish can depart the flight there for their leave.

In the first group using the program, 78 soldiers opted to spend their R&R in Europe.

The leave clock begins ticking at midnight the day troops get off their flight and stops when they sign back in for a return flight," Coplen said. "We don't want to charge leave to anyone who may have to wait for delayed flights."

Program officials are already looking at ways to extend the program, Walt Wood, Army G-1 point man for the program, explained.

"We are trying to add more entry ports in the continental U.S. to provide more equity to the soldiers," he said. "We want to get them closer to home."

Wood said long-range plans call for as many as three flights a day supporting 650 troops.

The Judge Says...

Items of legal interest to soldiers

Q: What should I do if paternity is asserted against me?

A: *If paternity is asserted against you, the first thing you should do is speak to an attorney. This topic is too complex to give guidance to fit all circumstances in a newsletter like this, but some basics can be covered.*

The process normally works like this: The mother of a child born outside of marriage contacts a state agency and applies for public assistance and/or help in requiring the alleged father to pay child support.

The state agency will contact the alleged father, and inform him that he has been alleged to be the father. If he is willing to admit to paternity, he can sign some papers and a monthly child support obligation will be computed. If he does not admit to paternity, then a blood or DNA test will be court-ordered.

If the test excludes the man from being the father, the action against him is closed. If he is determined to be the father, then a child support obligation will be established, and he will have to repay the costs of the test. If he does not participate in the test, then he will be named to be the father.

Anyone involved in a paternity action should seek specific advice from an attorney.

Q: How is child support calculated?

A: *Child support varies from state to state. It is usually calculated using a table or formula, so that the more you earn, the higher your monthly obligation. If there is no court order or written agreement between the parties, then Army Regulation 608-99 governs the amount of required support.*

Speak to an attorney if you have questions in this area.

Preventive law tip of the week:

If you got an email or letter claiming that if you gave your bank account number, millions of dollars from an overseas bank account would be deposited into your account, would you do it? You should not! A current scam claims to be from a Nigerian government official, who wants to legally transfer millions of dollars out of his country, and will give you a share if you provide your bank account number. Once that information is in the hands of a thief however, your identity can be stolen.

Man on the Street

How do you think mid-tour leave will affect division morale?



"It's only going to help those who get to go on it."

- Pfc. Ryan Boschert of St. Louis Mo., Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault)



"Some people really need it. Some of the soldiers... it's their first time here"

- Pfc. Dustin Hash of Lebanon, Mo., 37th Engineer Battalion

"The plan where we can only send 15 to 20 percent of the soldiers is probably going to hurt some soldiers' morale."

- CW2 Andrew Kedjierski of Statesville, N.C., 501st Signal Bn.



"It will help the soldiers who have families cool down and get refreshed."

- Spc. Donleigh Gaunky of Sparto, Wis., 501st Signal Bn.



"For the soldiers that go home, it's a wonderful thing; it's well deserved."

- Sgt. 1st Class Jess Todd of Loma, Colo., HHC 101st Abn. Div. (AAslt.)



"It's going to improve morale, but I think a problem we're going to have is soldiers not wanting to come back."

- Sgt. William Salsido of Clarksville Tenn., HHC 101st Abn. Div. (AAslt.)